



Envision Arlington Standing Committee

Date: February 12, 2020
Time: 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Location: Town Hall Annex, 1st floor meeting room

Minutes

Attendance: Juli Brazile, Sue Doctrow, Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Greg Christiana, Kelly Lynema
Guests: Len Diggins, Elizabeth Dray

1. Introductions
Greg is chairing this meeting. Elizabeth was visiting to learn more because she's considering joining the Standing Committee, and has been getting more involved in town, including running for Town Meeting this year. Other attendees introduced themselves.
2. Approve January minutes
Minutes approved with minor changes.
3. Reminder about Standing Committee mailing list
Greg said he realized that he was not receiving all the emails from the list and reminded everybody to check their email folders (e.g. spam). Juli explained that there are various people besides the Standing Committee members on this list, including those who might want to join, who work with us on various efforts, and other interested parties.
4. Discussion: Governance projects
Len is organizing precinct meetings again, for spring, as he did last fall and Adam McNeill is helping him. Greg also offered to help again, if needed. Sue said she'd be the representative for Precinct 21 this time because we had none last time. The hope is to have the meetings between election day and Town Meeting. Preliminary votes on the hottest warrant articles, as available, can be provided for discussion at the meetings. Juli will advise Len on logistics, including arranging space in schools. Also discussed was how to provide statements from TMM candidates to voters. Last year collecting and posting these was arranged at the last minute and there was subsequently a complaint that not all candidates were informed and had a chance to post a statement. This year, the statements will be presented by the League of Women Voters (LWV) instead of Envision Arlington but the Standing Committee will help ensure that all candidates are notified. Because email and social media have limitations, we can send a mailing, that Envision Arlington would pay for, to candidates at their home addresses, which are public record when they take out nomination papers. The mailing can direct them to a link for the google doc to submit their statements (the link, and the statements, will be available through the LWV website). Also discussed was whether LWV could make the printed statements available at Candidates Night, though that might require printing too much paper. At least the link should be clearly provided, perhaps in their printed booklet on town-wide candidate statements. Elisabeth said she'd coordinate the outreach to candidates with the LWV and Sue said she'd help Elisabeth with these letters. In future years, instructions for submitting candidate statements could be provided to candidates when they pull nomination papers at the Clerk's office.

Elisabeth reported that plans for Candidates Night (March 25) are moving along well. There is concern about the large number of candidates for town-wide office because of time constraints. Statement times and numbers of questions will need to be limited and Patsy Kramer has been consulted about time flexibility for the Town Hall booking.

The group discussed ways to promote the survey among people who don't subscribe to Town communication channels. Juli asked if we could email the faith community in Arlington through the DTG email list. Juli will also follow up with Jo Anne Preston about ideas she had for publicity. Scott will work with the schools to ask principals to send announcements to parents. Kelly will design a flyer for volunteers to post in apartment buildings, stores, and community bulletin boards.

5. Discussion: Survey outreach status

Juli described various efforts ongoing, including hanging flyers (several individuals have been pitching in on that). Coverage for the schools and some areas that have had low responses so far are needed. Kelly mentioned Precincts 1, 9, 17, and 18 as lower response precincts; Sue will follow up on a couple of sites that can cover Pct 19 (on Facebook, McClennen Park and Peirce). Bus shelters were also mentioned. Elisabeth expressed concerns about accessibility of the survey for those who speak other languages or are sight- or otherwise impaired. Juli will reach out to the Disability Commission to see if they have any ideas, potential volunteers, to help with this issue. Elisabeth noted that somebody from Arlington Housing Authority wanted pdf versions to share with others. Kelly noted that she had a call from somebody who is injured and cannot drive to the library and whose computer is broken; Elisabeth will follow up. Last year, the survey response was ~4500, perhaps with multiple household members responding. In past years, pre-online, response has been up to ~7000 households. Kelly suggested the online survey should be even shorter in the future (about 8 minutes was suggested) because people do stop in the middle and not continue, and the others agreed. Juli noted that most responses seem to be from middle class white homeowners so we really need to work on reaching and hearing from other demographic groups. Kelly noted that some survey comments found the demographic questions intrusive and Sue suggested that the reason for them (i.e., inclusion) might be explained briefly in the survey itself, as it was in the press release.

6. Vote: Warrant Article(s) to approve

a) The warrant article by Envision Arlington to update bylaw/vote wording (including changing Goals to value statements or similar terminology) was presented to the group, as submitted by Sue and Juli. It is consistent with what we voted to approve previously.

b) Civilian Police Review Board study committee. The wording has changed a lot since the Standing Committee voted to support or co-sponsor it. It is now much more specific, more like a vote than a warrant article. There were concerns that it could be leading the proposed study group into establishing this CPRB, exactly as described, rather than studying all options; and also leading Town Meeting to vote on a very specific plan with no amendments, or to reject it completely because it is so specific. It would be helpful to know more about the justification for this new wording and Juli will follow up with Jordan Weinstein, the lead proponent. It was agreed that the Standing Committee now needs to know more but, to everybody's knowledge, we were not listed as co-sponsors without having seen the final version.

c) Sue explained the 10-voter resolution to "urge" the Arlington Historic Districts Commission (AHDC) to approve any solar panel and similar energy efficient

installation that does not irreversibly change the historic architecture. It is a resolution only to request, on behalf of the town, voluntary leniency on these projects; Town Counsel advised that AHDC review is required by current state law and this cannot be changed by TM. The concern was discussed with Sustainable Arlington a few months ago by Sue, along with her neighbors whose solar panel project was rejected on aesthetic grounds. The submitted warrant article will be presented to Sustainable Arlington at their Feb 26 meeting, seeking their support. The Standing Committee voted to support it, conditional on its support by Sustainable Arlington, because this topic is under Sustainable Arlington, not Standing Committee, purview.

7. Discussion: Call for Publicity Lead and Treasurer

If members can help assume some of Juli's roles it could help take the pressure off an incoming acting chair. The Publicity Lead would work with Kelly and Joan Roman to filter task group requests for events to include on the town notices. They need to be short and to be sent early enough for Joan to plan and it would help her to have one point person (this has been Juli). Sue asked a lot of questions, particularly about how many notices there would be and Juli said no more than about 10 per year. Also needed is a Treasurer to keep track of the Standing Committee budget and to pay out expenses to task groups.

8. New Business

We must try to identify new Standing Committee members as well as acting chair(s) to take over for Juli when she steps down as chair. Kelly suggested that we try to have more interactions with the task groups. Elizabeth said that, if she joins, she could be liaison to the Diversity Task Group, because she is already involved with it.

Kelly volunteered to run the March Standing Committee meeting.